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names are also willed, but since their value depends on the goods expended to validate them, there is seldom bitterness about their allotment. Indeed, a chief who is the legal owner of a designation which came from above in the beginning of time, will in many cases choose to elevate his position with respect to a title of comparatively recent date. But if any person who is not a member of the ancestral family should dare to use an ancestral name, all the members rise to avenge the theft, for such they feel it to be. In recent years, however, this practice has become comparatively common. In such cases a man, eager to share in the glories of a myth and able to give a potlatch, has validated an ancestral name to which he has no right. The presence of the white man alone restrains the injured ancestral family. Names are sometimes lent or hired to those who are not members of the group for definite sums; the recipient recompenses the individual. If such names are not returned for several generations quarrels are apt to arise since the recipient claims to be the real owner and not the temporary possessor. During his tenancy of the name he is entitled to any prerogative attached to it, but he is not considered a *bona fide* member of the ancestral family.

Instances have occurred in which an old man or woman, believing himself to be the last survivor of an ancestral family, has donated his names and myth to those who have befriended him, or these have been taken by those who buried him. Some individuals are constantly watching to conduct the funerals of friendless old people in the hope of so obtaining names. But in almost every case this leads to friction, since it is virtually impossible for an ancestral family to die out. Perhaps in the next generation, perhaps in the following one, some youth will claim descent from the first ancestors of the supposedly defunct family, and claim the myth and names embodied therein. This leads to a feud with the person, or his descendants, who has received the names through aid given to the "last" of the family.

Such instances of an ancestral family becoming practically

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553
* 556 A man may receive so many prerogatives with regard to house
425 painting that he has to continue the designs on the sides of his
[606] dwelling, or he may receive so many figures for a totem-pole
[532] that he can erect one of composite pattern. X may acquire prerogatives not only from his father-in-law, but from his mother-in-law, and if he is the husband of several wives, the family of each may contribute something. If, for some inexplicable reason, X is not given any prerogative from the family of his wife, he uses one of his own ancestral myths with the names belonging thereto. A man who gives many potlatches can choose to validate numerous family names for himself, or to concentrate on one alone, elevating it to a position of great importance. But any names he validates must belong to his
[615] family; it is contrary to custom for a Bella Coola to steal a name to which he has no right.

*556 At this, or some other suitable time, X prays for assistance
782 in the complicated rites that are to follow. Taking four pieces of pounded and dyed cedar-bark, and four pieces of undyed bark, he places on each a small quantity of food and throws the eight into the fire. Likewise he may throw in four small pieces of any kind of goods. As he does so he appeals to the supreme god:

"Please strengthen my spirit for the many duties which are before me."

[756] Instead of praying himself, X may ask a shaman to do so for him, in the belief that the latter's supplication will be more efficacious.

*556 The necessity for supernatural assistance lies in the fact
688 that any serious error or disaster in the performance of potlatch
628 rites calls for summary punishment, since X has allowed ceremonial *tsaek* knowledge to reach the uninitiated. In such a case the duty of meting out a penalty falls upon the members of a foreign tribe. Nothing is said at the time, but the departing guests take away with them information of what has happened. Great latitude is allowed as to who shall be the chastisers. The guests may be related to X and the members

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performance of rites of this kind. But sociological and ethical concepts, shown at their highest development in the potlatch, are not limited to a few weeks of the year, or to any class of the community. Generosity on a large scale can be publicly displayed by chiefs alone, but to a lesser degree this virtue must be practised by everyone, since avarice is considered a major sin. Anyone who happens to pass a house in which a meal is taking place must be invited to share it; to do otherwise would be considered rude. The person summoned must take at least a trifle to show that he is not churlish and too proud to eat with his host, while if he is hungry, he shares whatever is being served as a matter of course. The head of the family should be the first to taste any wine[14] as proof that it is not poisoned, but otherwise he fares little, if any, better than his guests. This custom is now rapidly falling into disuse through the construction of individual family houses with doors and locks. The fisherman who has exclusive rights to a suitable place for netting olachen or salmon must give some of his catch to anyone who asks him. If he has landed four salmon, the first solicitor is given one, later comers, none at all. When a net is set in the river, anyone passing is allowed to raise it and take some of the contents; if there are two fish, he may remove one, if many, three or four. To take all would be a despicable theft, sufficient to brand the transgressor as greedy; hence public opinion prevents the system from being carried to excess. A hunter who brings back several mountain goats or other large game is expected to invite his neighbours to a feast, which virtually means that he must share his takings.

Presents of this kind increase the prestige of the donor who has thus acted in accordance with Bella Coola ethics, and are advantageous investments since others must reciprocate. The system is carried to such lengths that, until recent years, it was more profitable to give away goods than to sell them. In the case of a sale, the purchaser endeavours to give as little as possible, whereas the recipient of a gift returns as much as

[14] This is a modern practice, dating from the introduction of home-brew.

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[The Breaker Dance]

*575 *796 [424] *lsaix*. X is one of the few *kukusiut* having the prerogative of using supernatural singers. The evening's ceremony concludes in the usual fashion.

Until the departure of his call, X is liable to fits of frenzy so that on both *qotlim* and *nebusam* he often visits every house and breaks utensils, though his guardians appear to be making every effort to restrain him. Breakers, irrespective of their [424] exact prerogative, are enabled to act in any unusual manner they desire, and strive to excel in peculiar behaviour. A favourite trick is to smear themselves with excrement, either real or imitation. It is difficult to over-estimate the enormous [554] [787] [828] prestige which such actions call forth in the eyes of the uninitiated, to whom it appears that the coming of a call entirely alters the mentality of the recipient, a belief which the *kukusiut* make every effort to maintain. Nothing further need be said of either *qotlim* or the preliminaries of *nebusam*, both of which follow the usual pattern.

*575 *796 781 When the uninitiated are admitted to X's house on *nebusam* evening, they are filled with wonder at the sight of the masked singers, of *Sänoltxmulelts Älquntäm*, and of the four supernatural Breakers who move wildly to and fro as the songs are sung, as if only the eagle down which the *kukusiut* blow upon them restrains them from destroying property. The fluent *Änoºlikwolsaix* makes the most of her opportunity to describe the wonders which are before their eyes. Then the uninitiated are told that it will be safer for them to withdraw, and hurry out. Presently they are startled to hear the sound of people moving, and the four supernatural Breakers, followed by all the *kukusiut*, leave the house and proceed to the lowest one in the village. Around the fire go the masked four, picking up stones and hurling them at any destructible property. Most [252] [578] [685] houses contain a number of stones which have been used in boiling liquids, so that there is no lack of missiles. *Kukusiut* who are wise take care to hide or remove valuable property before this inroad begins, since the wearers of the masks take advantage of the opportunity to destroy the goods of those

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[The Breaker Dance]

they do not like. No compensation can be claimed, on the theory that supernatural beings do not have to pay for any damage they may do. Although the property of some *kukusiut* is destroyed, the chief sufferers are the uninitiated; this serves to increase their fear and respect for the society with which such all-powerful beings are in league. After visiting every house in the village, the party returns to X's, where the masks are burnt, the call sent back, and the proceedings conclude in the usual manner.

A certain amount of information concerning the history of the Breaker dance was obtained from *Sxek*, the owner of the prerogative just described. He is a well-informed man, but the writer had no opportunity of comparing his beliefs with those of his associates, so the following must be regarded as unsubstantiated evidence. This man stated that the Breaker dance is the most important of all in Bella Bella, and that many Bella Coola prerogatives have been obtained from this source, although some of their first ancestors likewise enjoyed it. He further stated that the term, *noltcista*, by which the Bella Coola always designate a Breaker, is of Bella Bella origin, and that the ancient Bella Coola term was *dirtia*.[1] *Sxek* also told of an occasion when a number of Bella Bella, present on the *qothm* night of a Bella Coola ceremony, were disturbed when eating by the thud of a stone thrown, from outside, against the wall of the back-room. Out rushed a number of *kukusiut*, incensed at the disrespect shown to their gathering. They caught the offender, but released him when he was found to be a Bella Bella Breaker, foolishly demonstrating his prowess. The marshals decided to retaliate and arranged with two Bella Coola Breakers to exercise their rights and destroy the canoes and food-boxes of their guests. They did so, and later paid for the damage. The Bella Coola were thus able to demon-

[1] *Sxek* and several of his children are the only Bella Coola known to the writer who habitually use the sound "r." For example, he says "*Snulsri*," instead of "*Snulsli*." He says that he is himself unable to distinguish any peculiarity in his own pronunciation, although other Bella Coola are aware of it.

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*533 B *Sâsistxngwas* | *ôlâxulx* | *xkŝ'alpsdulxdai* | *dixmâtumpdjx*
Go within | my house, | I am giving food | to my friends.

[WORDLESS CHORUS]

C The third part of this song has been forgotten.

[614] [424] [685] [609] (*a*) Recorded as song VII D 28b, National Museum of Canada; singer, Jim Pollard. It is said that this song has been handed down for generations in an ancestral family; they now regard it as a family possession and would consider its use by others to be stealing.

(*b*) Many years ago a solitary Bella Bella used to paddle to Kimsquit almost every year. He was dressed like a chief and had the mien of one, so that his hosts assumed him to be a person of importance. It was later found that he was a poor man. The mocking of foreigners is a common theme of *a'alk* songs.

am'kl a *Song Used for Xmxmlaix*(*a*)

*533 575 578 A *Nulwulukâxtmamqualsan* | *silxwosmaikila*
He has fallen so that his buttocks are uppermost, | Hail(*b*)!

Damunmulsan·imut | *skustutdas*
He has come to hurt, | that *kusiut*(*c*).

[WORDLESS CHORUS]

B and *C*. The second and third parts have been forgotten.

(*a*) Recorded as song VII D 3c, National Museum of Canada; singer, Jim Pollard.

(*b*) A mockingly deferential salutation used in *a'alk* songs describing the *kukusiut*.

(*c*) *Xmxmlaix* was an *a'alk* who is said to have seen a Cannibal *kusiut* when the latter was supposed to be in the land above. A song was composed about the incident, and the above fragment has been remembered for many years. *Xmxmlaix* was initiated into the *kusiut* society; see vol. II, p. 265.

*533 575 796 203 As already described, whenever a dancer is performing, the women utter a peculiar high-pitched drone and the heralds call out remarks suitable to the occasion. A phonograph record[1] was made of the drone, followed by a cry suitable for either *sisaok* or *a'alk* dances. The following words are virtually sung:

Yelostâldimut | *stâlxmpakais*
Do not err, | chiefs.

[1]Recorded as song VII D 29c, National Museum of Canada.

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seldom a chief who had given many potlatches. Successful raiders rarely slew such an one; his position placed him above the dangers to which lesser men were subject.

Raids appear never to have been carried out solely for the purpose of giving warriors opportunities to display their prowess, or of permitting young men to prove their mettle. Scarcity of food was the commonest cause for forays when, of course, the victims were chosen for their accumulated supplies. The Kwakiutl especially, lacking abundance of salmon, often attacked the Bella Coola. Even more dreaded were the Kitkatla, the most warlike people of the central coast, who used to raid for many miles to carry off slaves whom they sold or traded for other commodities. Trespassing, too, was a source of friction which often led to hostility. In such a case, the offenders were usually held up to ridicule at potlatches, and the irritation gradually increased until wiped out in bloodshed. Members of a tribe which had suffered from a raid prompted by any of these motives would await a suitable opportunity for retaliation; this in turn would be avenged, and a vendetta often ensued lasting for generations. As already described, a ceremonial error brought punishment from a neighbouring tribe; this was the only motive which caused fighting between different Bella Coola villages. In the last century there was a struggle of this kind between the people of *Stuxʷ* and *Ałqälaxl* in which the former were victorious and took many slaves who were later ransomed. When ill-luck had dogged a village or a group of villages for some time, the inhabitants sometimes endeavoured to wipe out their misfortunes by attacking another tribe.

The teeming salmon at Bella Coola, Kimsquit, and *Tăl·io*, made it unnecessary for the Bella Coola to wage aggressive war for which they were unfitted both on account of their unmilitary attitude and their lack of central authority. On the other hand, they were tempting victims for more belligerent neighbours. The narrow Bella Coola valley, however, far removed from the open sea, and densely populated, was difficult to attack.